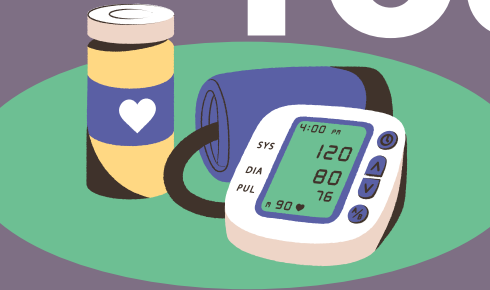


DO YOU KNOW YOUR HEALTH NUMBERS?



Edition 06 | HEALTH EQUITY BEAT
A HEALTH EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

In Erie County, from 2017-2019, there were over 3500 hospital visits related to heart failure and diabetes. Many of these hospital visits could have been prevented through primary health care and lifestyle changes. Take control of your health by learning your health numbers and tracking your health changes over time.

WHAT ARE YOUR NUMBERS?

Tests for blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar can help you learn about your health. These health numbers can show if you are at risk of health problems. Many health problems connected to high blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar are avoidable. If you check your numbers on a regular basis, you can watch how your health changes. Tracking your health numbers is a great way to prevent and help understand serious health problems. If you see your health numbers increase, you can make an appointment to see a doctor and ask questions about the changes you see. Symptoms like chest pain, difficulty breathing or fatigue may mean that you have developed a health problem. If you experience these symptoms, get medical attention right away.

CHECK YOUR NUMBERS

Places common health tests are available:

● PHARMACY

Drugstore & grocery store pharmacies may check your blood pressure and blood sugar for free. Some of these pharmacies have self-serve machines that check basic health numbers.

● HEALTHCARE CENTER

A healthcare center offers many health services. You can also find a primary care doctor there. Find a healthcare center here: snapcapwny.org/#members2 ☞

● BLOODWORK LAB OR CLINICAL LAB

A lab takes a sample of blood, urine and other body fluids or tissue to test for information about your health. Lab tests are typically ordered by a doctor. Other tests may be available without a doctor but may not be covered by your insurance. Find labs here: www.labfinder.com ☞

● HOME

Home testing equipment can help you keep track between healthcare visits.



Erie County
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IMPORTANT SIGNS & SYMPTOMS



Our body communicates health problems through signs and symptoms. **SIGNS** are normally visible or can be measured. Your temperature, breathing and heart rate are the most common signs. Blood pressure, blood sugar and cholesterol are also important signs. **SYMPTOMS** are conditions you may feel but others might not see. Common symptoms include pain, nausea, dizziness and fatigue. It is important to remember that everyone is unique. Signs of good health for you may be different from your loved ones. Your overall health may also be impacted by medication, health conditions and family history. Talk to your doctor to learn more about your unique signs and symptoms.

BLOOD PRESSURE

The force of blood pushing against the walls of your arteries. Arteries carry blood from your heart to other parts of your body. Blood pressure is measured by wrapping a cuff around your arm, pumping air into the cuff and listening to your pulse. Too-low or too-high blood pressure can cause health problems. Low blood pressure is called hypotension. High blood pressure is called hypertension.

CHOLESTEROL

A fat-like substance found in all of the cells in your body. Cholesterol is found in foods high in fat. Cholesterol is measured with a blood test using a sample taken from your arm. If you have too much cholesterol in your blood, it can cause high blood pressure and heart disease.

TRIGLYCERIDES

A type of fat found in many foods. Your body stores extra calories from food as triglycerides. Triglycerides are measured when cholesterol is measured. High triglycerides can put you at risk for heart disease.

WHY NOT BMI?

BMI stands for body mass index. It is a measurement of fat inside your body, shown as a percent of your weight. Some doctors use it to measure your health. BMI is not always accurate and does not account for other factors such as muscle mass.

BLOOD SUGAR

Also known as blood glucose level or "sugar." Glucose is a type of sugar in your blood that comes from the foods you eat. Blood sugar is measured by taking a small sample of blood from your fingertip. High levels can cause diabetes. Low blood sugar can make you feel dizzy and anxious.

HEMOGLOBIN A1c TEST

A series of blood tests that measures your average blood sugar over two to three months. A1c can be measured using a fingertip sample or a blood test using a sample taken from your arm. This test is used to detect diabetes.

COMMON HEALTH PROBLEMS

Diabetes and heart disease are two common serious health problems.

Your numbers can show signs of these problems developing. Talk to your doctor to learn more.

Diabetes is a chronic or long-lasting health problem that affects how your body uses food for energy. Insulin is a hormone that turns sugar into energy. When you have diabetes, your body does not make enough or cannot make insulin. Without insulin, too much blood sugar stays in your body and causes health problems such as poor blood flow. Some people with diabetes will lose fingers, toes or feet due to poor blood flow. This is not normal and can be prevented.

Heart disease includes several different heart health problems. If you have any of these conditions, you have heart disease:

- Hypertension (high blood pressure)
- Heart attack
- Atherosclerosis
- Heart failure
- Coronary artery disease (CAD)

Symptoms of heart disease include chest pain, shortness of breath and numbness in your upper body. If you feel any of these symptoms, get medical attention right away.



UNDERSTANDING YOUR NUMBERS



BLOOD PRESSURE (AFTER RESTING)

Your blood pressure is read as a top whole number "over" a bottom whole number- for example, "110 over 70." The top number is called systolic blood pressure. The bottom number is called diastolic blood pressure.

LOW 90 or less	NORMAL 91-120 61-80	ELEVATED 121-129 61-80	HIGH STAGE 1 HYPERTENSION 130-139 80-89	HIGH STAGE 2 HYPERTENSION above 140 above 90	EMERGENCY above 180 above 120
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CHOLESTEROL (AFTER NOT EATING FOOD FOR 8-10 HOURS)

Cholesterol is shown as three whole numbers with a unit of measure (mg/dL). "HDL" and "LDL" are two different types of cholesterol tested in a cholesterol test, also called a lipid panel.

NORMAL Total: 200 mg/dL or less LDL: 100 mg/dL or less HDL: 60 mg/dL or more	INTERMEDIATE Total: 201-239 mg/dL LDL: 101-159 mg/dL HDL: 41-59 mg/dL	AT RISK FOR HEART DISEASE Total: 240 mg/dL or more LDL: 160mg/dL or more HDL: 40 mg/dL or less
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Note: Some sources will show separate cholesterol levels for men and women. It is important to understand that this difference is related to the level of the hormone estrogen found in your body. Each of us is unique and our estrogen level may not relate to our gender. Your level of estrogen can be impacted by pregnancy, menopause, medication and more. Family history and lifestyle also play a role in your cholesterol. Talk with your doctors about what range that is right for you.



TRIGLYCERIDES (AFTER NOT EATING FOOD FOR 8-10 HOURS)

Triglycerides are shown as a whole number with a unit of measure (mg/dL) in a cholesterol test, also called a lipid panel.

NORMAL 150 mg/dL or less	INTERMEDIATE 151-199 mg/dL	HIGH 200-499 mg/dL	VERY HIGH 500 mg/dL or more
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BLOOD SUGAR AND A1c (FOR BLOOD SUGAR, YOU TEST AFTER NOT EATING FOOD FOR 8-10 HOURS. FOR A1c, YOU CAN EAT NORMALLY)

Blood sugar is shown as a whole number. A1c is shown as a percent. A1c is your average blood sugar over 3 months. Numbers shown here are for people without a diagnosis for diabetes.

LOW 70 mg/dL or less	NORMAL 71-99 mg/dL A1c: 5.7% or less	AT RISK FOR DIABETES 100-125 mg/dL A1c: 5.7%-6.4%	DIABETES 126 mg/dL or more A1c: 6.5% or more
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NONE OF THE INFORMATION IN THIS NEWSLETTER SHOULD EVER BE USED AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR DIRECT MEDICAL ADVICE FROM A HEALTHCARE PROVIDER.

TO LEARN MORE: [BLOOD PRESSURE](#) [CHOLESTEROL](#) [TRIGLYCERIDES](#) [BLOOD SUGAR](#)

MANAGING YOUR HEALTH



← More info online

Keeping track of your numbers is just one part of managing your health. Lifestyle plays an important role in your health, too. Here are some ways you can maintain good health.

PRIMARY CARE IS IMPORTANT

One of the best ways to manage your health is to visit a primary care doctor regularly. Your doctor can give you advice and may prescribe medications to help you stay in good health.

HOW YOU DEAL WITH STRESS MATTERS

Stress has a direct impact on blood pressure. Many people use cigarettes, alcohol, cannabis or other substances to deal with stress. These things can cause serious health problems. You are worth the time it takes to cope in a healthy way.

GET HELP DEALING WITH STRESS

Crisis Services ☎ (716) 834-3131
Erie County Warmline (5PM-11PM) ☎ Call: (716) 284-2941
Text: (716) 392-2221
Erie County 24-hour Addiction Hotline ☎ (716) 831-7007

WHAT YOU EAT MATTERS

Consuming too much sodium raises blood pressure. Sodium is more than just table salt. Up to 75% of the sodium we consume is hidden in processed foods like tomato sauce, soups, condiments, canned foods and prepared mixes. Learn more about nutrition and food labels here: www.myplate.gov ☎

ASK FOR MORE!

If you want to know more about your health, ask a doctor or visit a bloodwork lab for more tests. Your doctor can order tests based on signs and symptoms you notice. You can test for hormone levels, vitamins and nutrients, infections and more. You know your body best, so tell your doctor if you think something is wrong. Check with your insurance provider to learn what is covered and what your costs may be.

HEALTHCARE CENTERS

Find affordable primary care, behavioral health and dental care at a center near you: snapcapwny.org/#safety ☎

HEALTH INSURANCE



- Ask your employer about health insurance benefits
- Call Erie County Department of Social Services at (716) 858-8000
- Visit mybenefits.ny.gov ☎

SIGN UP FOR THE PATIENT PORTAL



Many healthcare providers have a "portal" website where you can create an account to log in and privately view your health information. There, you can find your test results before your next appointment and get ready to ask important questions. Ask your healthcare provider about portal access. Ask for help if you are not sure how to use your portal website.



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The Erie County Office of Health Equity's vision is for everyone in Erie County to achieve maximum health and wellness. The Office of Health Equity is located within the Erie County Department of Health.

Want to learn more?

Visit www.erie.gov/health-equity ☎

Email us at HealthEquity@erie.gov



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